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DECEMBER 21, 1914

A special meeting of the Club was held in the lecture room of the New York Botanical Garden, December 21, 1914, at which forty persons were present. Vice-President Barnhart presided.

An illustrated lecture on "Some New Ideas Regarding Lichens," under the title "Lichens" was given by Dr. Bruce Fink.

Dr. Fink gave a brief historical survey from the time lichens were regarded as mosses, algae, or fungi to the present time when research seems to have established the belief that the lichen is a fungus parasitic on an alga. In proof of this position, the relation of the lichen to its algal host was considered briefly. Following this, work on the taxonomy of the Collemaceae, based upon the supposition that these plants are fungi, was presented by lantern-slides. The cortex, the medulla, the reproductive areas, and the structure of various parts of the apothecium were discussed with a view to showing their various values as taxonomic characters. Such interesting features,—transitional forms showing how a cortex may have arisen, the varying degree of development of cortices, the methods and degrees of branching of paraphyses, and the presence of internal spermatia were considered. Finally the old and the new types of lichen diagnoses were presented and compared.

Adjournment followed.

B. O. DODGE,
Secretary.

NEWS ITEMS

It is difficult to get information about botanists who are serving in their respective armies during the war, but from Germany some news has come through. According to the *Evening Post* the Berlin *Tageblatt* has an interesting article on the botanists in the field. One of the most eminent of those who early took up arms, Dr. Brandt, has fallen in battle, on the Russian frontier. He hurried to the front from the Spanish Sierra Nevada, where he had been collecting plants. His dissertation on "Der morphologische Bau der Weinstockgewächse" at once attracted the attention of the learned world. Dr. Brandt was barely thirty

years of age. He had been decorated with the iron cross for his bravery.

From the same source we quote the following: " The botanists in military uniform do not neglect their scientific interests even in the trenches. Every chance to get into the open is devoted to the collecting and pressing of plants, and the " war herbarium" is an adjunct of many a military camp. Dr. Schottky, the son of the Berlin mathematician, Professor Schottky, writes from the battlefield of Arras that he found in a well rare ferns and moss. Among other prominent botanists in the field are Count von Schwerin, head of the Dendrological Society of Berlin, who is attached to the General Staff; Dr. Baupel, of the Berlin Botanical Museum, who as a lieutenant is drilling recruits; Prof. Erwin Baur, who was to have lectured in Batavia on his special subject, " The Progress of the Theory of Heredity as Applied to the Cultivation of Tropical Plants," and who had been designated to go to the University of Wisconsin as exchange professor; and the Curator of the Botanical Museum, Professor Mildbraed, whose whereabouts are unknown. Many equally famous German botanists are in the East, some of them as prisoners of war in Japan."

Professor Volney Rattan, author in 1879 of " A Popular California Flora," which subsequently ran through many editions, died in Berkeley, California, March 5, 1915. He had given his life to the teaching of botany in the California normal and high schools. His discussion of the peculiar germination of *Echinocystis californica* attracted the attention of Charles Darwin, who makes note of it in " The Power of Movement in Plants."

According to the *Sun* the orchid collection of the late Joseph Chamberlin is to be sold at auction during April in London. For many years it was one of the finest private collections of orchids in the world.

Dr. J. C. Bose, of Presidency College, Calcutta, who has been lecturing in the United States on physiological botany, sailed from San Francisco on March 20.

It is reported in *Science* that Dr. William Trelease of the University of Illinois has been granted leave of absence from the university until May first, for a botanical expedition to Guatemala.

The report on the geography and vegetation of northern Florida by Dr. R. M. Harper, comprising over 300 pages, and issued by the Florida State Geological Survey late in 1914, may be had free by applying to the Survey at Tallahassee, Florida, and enclosing postage.

It is reported in *Science* that Henry Chandler Cowles, Charles Joseph Chamberlin, and Otis William Caldwell have all been promoted to be professors of botany at the University of Chicago.

Dr. and Mrs. N. L. Britton, Dr. and Mrs. N. Wille, and Messrs. Stewardson Brown and J. F. Cowell have all returned from Porto Rico where they were carrying on botanical exploration of that island.

Announcements have been issued for the field meetings of the club from April 3 to May 31. Some of these meetings are to be held on Sunday instead of Saturday as heretofore. Copies of this announcement may be had from Mr. Percy Wilson, chairman of the field committee, New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Park, N. Y. City.

Dr. John K. Small, New York Botanical Garden, recently returned from southern Florida. He spent about four weeks exploring and collecting in the little-known parts of tropical Florida. Most of the time was devoted to unexplored hammocks of the Everglade Keys. Interesting results were obtained and a number of West Indian species were added to the flora of the United States.

A Monograph of the *Usneaceae* of North America and Canada, by R. A. Howe, Jr. (Memoir of the Thoreau Museum of Natural History), appeared early in April, 1915. It completes the treatment of the genus *Usnea*.

Professor H. H. Whetzel, of Cornell University, spent the early part of April in New York, visiting the botanic gardens

and many florists, studying plant diseases. He has delivered several lectures before different organizations in the city.

The daily papers report that Mr. G. W. Brackenridge has given his $100,000 yacht "Navidad" to the University of Texas to be fitted up for scientific survey work, particularly animal and plant surveys.

Nearly one thousand packets of seed offered in exchange by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden have been sent at the request of the different botanical gardens to Europe. Most of these gardens are in the countries now at war. The Brooklyn Botanic Garden has also distributed eighty thousand penny packets of flower and vegetable seeds to the school children of Brooklyn.